

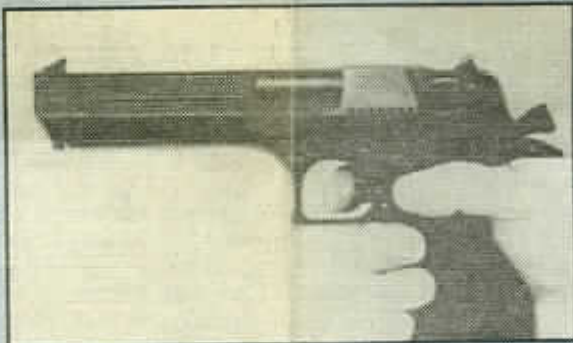
Investigators examine link to other shootings

By Bill Snyder
The Tribune

THU AUG 3 1989

Police say Charles Arnett Stevens accused of being the freeway killer, fits a "frightening" personality profile developed by investigators, who yesterday also said he may be connected to unsolved shooting incidents/dating

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DESERT EAGLE

- Caliber: .357
- Weight: Loaded, 4.5 pounds
- Length: 10.25 inches
- Capacity: 9 rounds
- Bullet speed: 1,430 feet per second
- Price: \$799

Suspect

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back several years.

Tipped off by the killer's distinctive, Israeli-made .357 magnum, homicide investigators realized weeks ago that they were dealing with a serial killer, said Capt. James Hahn of the Oakland police.

"When the killing frenzy becomes intense they make mistakes," he said.

Stevens' alleged choice of weapon — an exotic gun that leaves distinctive evidence for ballistics experts — and his failure to flee the scene of the last killing, may have been those mistakes, investigators believe.

Prosecutors, meanwhile, said the 20-year-old Oakland man could face the gas chamber if convicted of a four-month shooting spree along Interstate 580.

Deputy District Attorney Terese Drabec said prosecutors expect to seek the death penalty because charges against Stevens involve multiple counts of murder.

He is charged with three counts of murder and six counts of attempted murder.

Hahn acknowledged that police are questioning someone else in connection with the shootings but declined to comment further.

Police yesterday said they are looking at unsolved killings, some of them more than a year old, to see if Stevens may have been involved.

"We're looking as far back as he has been in the area," said Hahn, who would not provide details of other cases possibly linked to Stevens.

The Tribune has learned, however, that police believe Stevens may have been involved in the death of an unidentified young woman whose badly burned body was found in a stolen Mazda on the 500 block of Chetwood Street on Oct. 18.

Stevens, who lived one block away on Jean Street, has been linked to two other crimes on that block of Chetwood:

■ He is accused of the April 3 murder of Leslie Noyer. She had been shot several times and was found next to a Mazda parked in

the driveway of 541 Chetwood St.

Investigators said Stevens and Noyer, a 29-year-old cosmetologist, may have known each other slightly.

■ Stevens was found guilty last February of stealing a Jeep Cherokee parked on the block. He was also found guilty of two other counts of auto theft and sentenced to a year in county jail.

Because of jail overcrowding and time off for good behavior, he served just four months of that sentence, according to a spokeswoman for the Alameda County Sheriff's Department.

The gun allegedly used in the deaths of Raymond August, 28, Lori Rochon, 36, and Noyer is an IMI Desert Eagle, a semiautomatic pistol that sells for \$799 in the Eastbay.

Police said the 4.5-pound weapon is deadly at close range. It fires a .357-magnum bullet, one of the most powerful handgun cartridges available, and can easily be modified to fire the even more dangerous .44-magnum bullet.

When arrested last Thursday — also in a stolen Mazda — police said Stevens had a Desert Eagle in his possession. Officers said the weapon was not registered to him, but had not been stolen. They declined to say where he got it.

Despite its power, said Hahn, it is not a weapon that a criminal would use if he were planning carefully.

"It's too distinctive. It leaves unmistakable marks on the shells and casings," he said. Stevens, who investigators say seems intelligent, "was composed and showed no remorse" after his arrest last Thursday for the slaying of August on Interstate 580.

"Serial killers," said Hahn, "are so bright they are frightening."

But studies of serial killers reveal that despite their intelligence, they become overwhelmed by the need to obtain gratification by killing, Hahn said.

"They become restless. They begin to think they are smarter than the police and can get away with anything," he said.

4th charge for sniper suspect

FRI MAY 4 1990

By Harry Harris
The Tribune

Charles Arnett Stevens already being prosecuted on three murder charges, including the freeway sniper shootings of two motorists, was charged yesterday with a fourth murder in the slaying of an Oakland teenager last year.

Police said they relied mainly on ballistics evidence to connect Stevens to the killing of Laquan D. Sloan on June 8. Homicide investigators said Sloan, 16, was shot with the same distinctive Israeli-made .357 Desert Eagle used in the other slayings.

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Sloan, a suspected narcotics dealer, was killed as he walked alone in the 700 block of 27th Street by someone "who drove up, got out of the car and blasted him," Sgt. Robert Chenault said yesterday.

Chenault said police are unsure of the exact motive for the slaying but suspect it had something to do with a dispute Sloan had been involved in earlier with a man recently paroled from prison.

Chenault said police believe the parolee owed Sloan money for narcotics and Sloan had broken a flower pot over the man's head in an effort to collect his debt.

Police believe the parolee told Stevens about the incident and Stevens may have "been doing the man a favor" when he shot Sloan, Chenault said.

At first the parolee denied knowing Stevens, Chenault said, but police found witnesses who connected them.

Stevens will be arraigned on the new charge today when his preliminary hearing on the other murder charges is scheduled to resume in Oakland Municipal Court.

He already is charged with killing airline mechanic Raymond August on July 27 as well as Lori Rochon on July 6 and Leslie Noyer on April 3, 1989.



Charles Arnett Stevens
Another murder charge

Both August and Rochon were killed by gunshots fired from another car as they drove on Interstate 580.

Noyer was found lying next to her car in the 500 block of Chetwood Street, two blocks from Interstate 580. Police believe she was killed after either having sex with Stevens or because she threatened to go to police about other crimes in which Stevens was involved.

One of those testifying at today's hearing is Oakland police criminalist Lansing Lee, a ballistics expert who is expected to link the Desert Eagle gun to the four slayings.

Also scheduled to testify is homicide Sgt. John McKenna, who interviewed Stevens after his arrest July 27.

Stevens is being held without bail at the North County Jail in downtown Oakland.

SAT JUL 28 1990

I-580 sniper suspects give not guilty pleas

Two men pleaded innocent yesterday to charges of random shootings that left four people dead in Oakland last year, including two motorists on Interstate 580.

Charles Arnett Stevens and Richard James Clark Jr., both 21, entered their pleas before Alameda County Superior Court Judge Sandra Margulies exactly a year after one of the freeway victims was killed.

William and Geraldine Raymond, whose son, Raymond August, was shot near the 35th Avenue exit of the Freeway on July 27, 1989, quietly wiped tears from their eyes as the two defendants were arraigned on murder charges.

Stevens is charged with four counts of murder and six counts of attempted murder and Clark is accused of one count of murder.

Margulies ordered both men to return to court on Sept. 21 and 28 for pretrial motions and on Oct. 4 when the case is scheduled to be assigned to a trial judge.

Stevens is charged with killing August and Lori Rochon, who were shot on the freeway on July 6, and 16-year-old Laquan D. Sloan in the 700 block of 27th St. on June 8.

Both are accused of murdering Leslie Noyer, whose body was found next to her car in the 500 block of Chetwood Street on April 3.

S.A.T. JUN 16 1990

'Urban hunter' to stand trial for 4 slayings

An Oakland man described by authorities as "an urban hunter" was ordered yesterday to stand trial on four counts of murder and six counts of attempted murder for allegedly firing random shots at people.

At the conclusion of 21-year-old Charles Stevens preliminary hearing in Oakland Municipal Court, Judge Courtland Arne ruled that there was sufficient evidence to bind Stevens over to Alameda County Superior Court on charges stemming from a series of shootings on or near Interstate 580 in Oakland. Stevens will appear in Superior Court on June 29 to have a trial date set.

Described by prosecutor Aaron Payne as "a cold-blooded killer," Stevens is accused of murdering four people and attempting to murder six others in at least seven different incidents, most of which occurred close to his residence near the freeway in Oakland.

SAT MAY 5 1990

I-580 sniper suspect denies firing weapon

By Harry Harris
The Tribune

Even though admitting he had the suspected murder weapon with him, freeway sniper suspect Charles Stevens denied in a taped statement to police a few hours after his arrest he shot anyone, according to court testimony yesterday.

In the taped statement, Stevens admitted having the distinctive Israeli-made Desert Eagle .357 semiautomatic pistol with him the morning of last July 27 when he is accused of killing airline engineer Raymond August

on Interstate 580.

But he told homicide Sgts. John McKenna and Brian Thiem he only had the gun stuck in his waistband "for protection mainly" and had not fired it since taking it to a pistol range three or four months earlier.

In the taped statement, played at Stevens' preliminary examination, Stevens, then 20, told police his sister, Georgina Stevens, had bought the gun for her protection but had given it to him to clean after they both used it at the pistol range.

When asked on tape how many

times he had fired the gun since the day on the range Stevens replied "none to my knowledge."

McKenna said outside of court that Stevens later did admit shooting the gun once into the seat of the Mazda he was driving the morning he was arrested. He also said police believe Stevens' sister bought the gun for him because he was not old enough to purchase it himself.

In the taped statement, Stevens said he had been driving around Oakland for several hours and did not know why police stopped and arrested him on

the 35th Avenue entrance to the westbound lanes of Interstate 580. In earlier testimony the eyewitness said he watched Stevens get off the eastbound lanes of the freeway at 35th Avenue after August was shot and then stop on the westbound on-ramp.

Besides the August killing, Stevens is charged with three other 1989 murders. They include the July 6 slaying of Lori Rochon, also killed as she drove on I-580; the April 3 killing of Leslie Noyer; and the June 8 killing of 16-year-old Laquan Sloan.